

Syllabus of 1864. A letter in *Macmillan* has attracted much attention in the English papers. By publishing the celebrated bull of Boniface VIII., *Unam Sanctam*, almost in full, the writer shows that Dr. Manning has given an incorrect impression of its meaning. He further proves that the dogma of infallibility was condemned in advance by two General Councils, those of Constance and Basle—the decrees being confirmed by no less than three Popes, Martin V., Eugene IV., and Pius II. The question then arises :—If, as Dr. Manning pronounces, Lord Acton and his recalcitrant friends “have *ipso facto* ceased to be Catholics” because they reject a dogma “promulgated” merely in a Council whose claim to the title of Œcumenical is, to say the least of it, doubtful, has not the Archbishop himself ceased to be a Catholic, since, by accepting the dogma, he has transgressed the canons of two infallible Councils as confirmed by three infallible Popes?

There is a political aspect to this controversy, of another kind. Mr. Gladstone's Irish legislation was prompted by a strong and overpowering sense of justice. It is not even supposable that a calculation of its consequences to Government or party ever found a place in his thoughts. At any rate, if any one should insist that he counted the cost, it is quite certain that his political arithmetic must have been at fault. He offended the bulk of his English supporters, Nonconformists and “Evangelical,” and thus exposed a breach in his defences, of which the Opposition were not slow to take advantage. The “religious” world has always looked with suspicion upon Mr. Gladstone's sacerdotal proclivities—it has not always turned an unwilling ear to rumours of an inclination Romewards, absurd as they obviously were. The appearance of the pamphlet has evoked some of the old enthusiasm amongst the rank and file of the Liberal party. Mr. Reed, M. P. for the Pembroke district, was the exponent of this feeling at Tenby, where

he expressed his “delight that this modern Saul is, so to speak, leaving his father's asses, and has pleased all honest Protestants by his late denunciations of the Vatican.” This joy over the returning prodigal is evidently grounded on the expectation that the ex-Premier's protest against Ultramontaniam will be followed by a radical change in his public policy. The Home Rulers appear to entertain a similar notion, which is quite sufficient to account for the anger and chagrin manifest in their criticism of the pamphlet. We believe that both parties are egregiously mistaken. There is nothing in Mr. Gladstone's public career to sanction the idea that he is prepared to recede from ground he has once occupied. He has travelled far from his original stand-point, but it has always been in a straight line and in a forward direction. There has never been an ebb and flow in the ex-Premier's political progress, and it is not probable, at this late date, that he will alternate between high and low water-mark. That the imaginary return to “sound” Protestantism will tend to consolidate the scattered divisions of English Liberalism is probable enough. The popular memory is proverbially short, as the ready forgetfulness of Mr. Gladstone's attitude towards the Public Worship Act may serve to show. It is as certain as any vaccination can be, which is founded on conclusions we draw regarding the character and dispositions of a fellow-man, that the return of the ex-Premier to office would be immediately followed by a new Irish University Bill, it may be more liberal than that on which he made shipwreck. There is another question on which a large section of his party desire their leader to speak in plain and unequivocal terms—the question of the National Church. Whether he is yet ready to advocate the policy of dis-establishment no one is in a position to say; that he will ultimately be found to favour, and perhaps effect it, is more than probable. At the same time it is not equally certain that he will, within the